THE FRONTIER

A CHRISTIAN COMMENTARY ON THE COMMON LIFE

EDITED BY
PHILIP MAIRET AND ALEC VIDLER

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MARCH 1950
Vol. I No. 3

'THE CHRISTIAN ATTITUDE' TOWARDS THE U.S.A.

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GEORGE MACLEOD & THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

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THE REFUGEES IN AUSTRIA

Daniel Jenkins, E. H. Robertson
Martin Jarrett-Kerr
John Heath-Stubbs

BASIL BLACKWELL · OXFORD

The Frontier

Published monthly in continuation of
the work of

The Christian News-Letter

Annual Subscription £1 : *Single Copies* 2/-

All Correspondence about Subscriptions to the Publisher
BASIL BLACKWELL, 49 Broad Street, Oxford

All Letters to THE EDITORS to be addressed to
The Frontier, 21 Essex Street, Strand, W.C. 2

Printed for Basil Blackwell, 49 Broad Street, by The Church Army Press, Cowley, Oxford.

CONTENTS

NOTES OF THE MONTH – – – – 83

INTERIM – – – – – – – – – 91

'THE CHRISTIAN ATTITUDE' TOWARDS THE U.S.A.– – – – – – – 94
By Daniel Jenkins

GEORGE MACLEOD AND THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND – – – – – – 99
(*From a Scottish Correspondent*)

THE REFUGEES IN AUSTRIA AND THE CONFERENCE OF SALZBURG, 1950– – – 104
By E. H. Robertson

REVIEWS
Twenty-Five O'clock by Martin Jarrett-Kerr – – 113
Christianity after Freud by John Heath-Stubbs – 116

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS – – – – 118
From Peter Ralph-Bowman and D. C. Lusk

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THE
FRONTIER
A CHRISTIAN COMMENTARY ON THE COMMON LIFE

Vol. I. No. 3. MARCH 1950

Notes of the Month

AS the dust of the electoral scuffle settles, Britain should, one would suppose, be facing a fairer prospect than it had to face after the General Election of 1945. Then, the most destructive of world wars had not quite ended: now, after four and a half years of its aftermath, reconstruction has proceeded until the most advanced countries are well on the way to recovery. Yet there is less optimism than on the former occasion, even if we judge by the recent electoral appeals of the parties. Except from the less responsible orators or in the heat of argument, there has been little attempt to succeed by large promises to the public, and there have been signs of a mood of apprehension behind the scenes, not confined to one side. The worries are of course due to the economic outlook—never can an election have been conducted with so much, and such complicated, reference to economic affairs—for although the world cannot have become a harder place for the nation to work in, and should surely be an easier one, we have all learnt more about its difficulties. One correspondent of ours, who is an experienced student of affairs and is certainly not alone in his opinion, says he cannot avoid thinking that this country's business life will soon be struck by two "tidal waves"—first, when the American aid we are receiving comes to an end, and secondly (if not previously), when we

face the full consequences of being a high-cost country, having to earn its food and materials in a world of lower costs, which no longer needs us as it did.

How long can America help?

We should do well to look these things in the face, for both are conditions we shall have to reckon with, though they need not cause sudden calamities; they are challenges we must be morally prepared to meet. One of them—the ending of American aid—may be further delayed: America will have, as before, strong political reasons for continuing assistance to Britain by one financial method or another, or, at least for avoiding any sudden stoppage of it. The extent and value of this help will however depend partly upon the spirit in which it is received, which is less good than it might be. The attitude of the British and other European peoples towards their Transatlantic benefactors is very usefully analysed by Mr. Daniel Jenkins later in this present number, and although his aspect of the case is mainly cultural, the disposition that he deplores also affects our business relations with the States. Britain, and the rest of Europe too, can accept American help without humiliation in the circumstances; and the U.S.A. can give it without excessive sacrifice; the "burdensome surpluses" of its abounding resources actually make it more convenient, as well as more blessed, to give than to receive. This giving is not without cost, however.

Counting the Cost

When Sir Stafford Cripps reminded us that the American dollar had declined in value since the war more than the British pound (until the latter was devalued) probably not many of his hearers paused to reflect that this decline in the money-unit of the most prosperous nation on earth was largely caused by free gifts of its products to us and other needy nations. To inflate its monetary currency is the most painless method by which America can give away so much of what its people labour to produce; for by this means

the expense is spread more evenly, by a kind of invisible leakage of value from the money in everyone's possession. But it also causes a constant rise in prices, and a demand for higher incomes to meet them, which must tend to increase the pace and restlessness of American life. Europe's economic recovery is thus being achieved partly at the expense of the Americans' nerves; and although such an immensely strong productive system can afford, physically, to give out wealth by this method almost indefinitely, there must be a psychological limit. It should be the prayer of Europe that America be not driven beyond that limit by the demands of the needier nations on the one hand and the fear of atomic war on the other. The withdrawal of American aid is unlikely to be sudden or very soon; but it is all the more urgent that we and other Europeans should work for and achieve independence of it.

A One-sided Recovery

This brings us to the other possibility our correspondent mentions—that of a "slump" in this country, caused by failure to sell its goods cheaply enough. Such a calamity has been known in the past, though not under our present semi-socialized conditions. A Government of to-day might be able to distribute the hardships it causes more evenly over the population and prevent extreme destitution; but such a breakdown of business as is still to be feared would severely test our moral and social cohesion. The danger proceeds from causes wider and even less tractable than the relatively high costs of British production in competition with that of other countries where the workers receive less wages for more work. A Report of the United Nations' economic experts, which was crowded out of public attention by the imminence of the General Election, predicts that a general crisis of unemployment is almost sure to arise throughout the Western world, a business depression that will be perhaps worse in its effects than that of twenty years ago, and it puts forward plans for preventing this and main-

taining full employment by international financial action. One must remember, however, that when governments speak of employment, they are primarily concerned about industry, not agriculture or services, except " civil services ". The gratifying recovery of Europe since the war gives evidence of this one-sidedness ; for European governments have been able, by their administration of Marshall Aid, to promote their employment policies more powerfully than ever before, and industrial output is already 15 per cent above that of the last pre-war year—a remarkable feat after the destruction of so much machinery and so many factories. But in the same countries agriculture still produces less than it did up to 1938, and there is a considerably larger population to support. Europe's dependence upon America, which can still produce vast agricultural as well as manufactured surpluses, is primarily due to this. Governments not only find it easier to stimulate manufacture, but have more reason to fear unemployment in their factory areas where the discontent it can produce is politically so much more formidable. To prevent this, it is even more necessary to be able to buy materials abroad than food. The real nightmare for our own statesmen is the thought of a slump so complete that the materials for industry could not be imported, even after the greatest possible reduction in the importation of food.

Productive Strength—and Weakness

This is not the place to discuss the experts' proposals, which are financial and may be worth trying : but they cannot meet the difficulty we are considering. The countries concerned might each be provided with sufficient claims on one another's industrial goods and yet be no better able to obtain the primary products—grain, wood, cotton, timber and metals—of which they are all more or less short. It is true that their manufactures are partly " complementary ", but the combination of the industrial forces of Europe—which such schemes are intended to bring about—would

cause a great increase of demand for the primary goods of other continents. These are becoming less available, not more so, since the age of colonization is passing away, and native peoples elsewhere are being organized into self-governing states. (We see one attempt to cope with this difficulty, and to get primary products from native peoples in a different way, in the African ground-nut scheme, and there will be others; but they are still problematical.) The great industrial systems have grown hitherto by putting this kind of work upon other peoples who work more cheaply, both at home and abroad. Under a free, democratic economy, any feeling of injustice may be prevented by an equality of opportunity for both nations and individuals to change their work, but if they do so beyond a point, too much of the best energies of men is withdrawn from the primary callings. The tendency of civilization to grow top-heavy in structure, arises from the largely successful efforts of individuals and families to attain a higher, or reputedly better, standard of life. The natural foundations of our civilization tend to be weakened for very human reasons.

The Instability of Civilizations

Some realization of this dilemma is necessary to the understanding of many frontier problems. The three great classes whose numbers tend to increase are those of big-scale industry, transport and government service; these are the occupations which the state is most concerned to keep contented. But the means to maintain the whole must be won more directly from nature by other occupations, in which men have to deal with very different facts and forces, and must live by simpler habits of mind and body. There are vital realities with which the ruling sections of society tend to lose contact, involved as they are in their own constructions. This same instability from which past civilizations have collapsed is also present in our own, and Christians do not expect it to escape the fate that awaits all the creations of man's mortal genius. The motives of profit and impor-

tance which in the end turn cultures into predatory empires are inherent in the fallen nature of man as it is revealed by Biblical tradition and Christian experience. That is why Christians live always in the expectation of the end of the world. Only when they live in that expectation can their work do something to redeem and preserve surrounding civilization, or, when disaster descends upon it, salvage what is indispensable to a human existence.

The relation between true religion and civilization was never so clearly shown as when the empire of Rome had disintegrated. Newman has described it, when writing of the work of St. Benedict, who—

> "found the world, physical and social, in ruins, and his mission was to restore it in the way, not of science, but of nature, not as if setting about to do it, not professing to do it by any set time, or by any rare specific, or by any series of strokes, but so quietly, patiently, gradually, that often till the work was done, it was not known to be doing. It was a restoration rather than a visitation, correction or conversion. The new work which he helped to create was a growth rather than a structure. Silent men were observed about the country, or discovered in the forest, digging, clearing and building; and other silent men, not seen, were sitting in the cold cloister, tiring their eyes and keeping their attention on the stretch, while they painfully copied and recopied the manuscripts which they had saved. There was no one who contended or cried out, or drew attention to what was going on, but by degrees the woody swamp became a hermitage, a religious house, a farm, an abbey, a village, a seminary, a school of learning and a city."[1]

It is in labour of this unplanned and unplannable kind that the religious spirit serves human culture and makes possible the creation of community out of chaos. It restores a life for man, upon which he can erect a new civilization when an old one has crumbled or crashed down: and in a settled or progressive society too, this life of devoted labour goes on, more or less obscurely, still remedial, still restorative, and helping to keep evils at bay. How much is being done even

[1] Quoted by Mr. Christopher Dawson in his newly published book *Religion and the Rise of Western Culture*, Sheed and Ward. 15s.

now by people in such services as, for example, dealing directly with the physically or mentally diseased or in other callings no less necessary, undertaken in no expectation of gain or honour, but followed for the love of God and the good of man?

Vocation and Occupation

A demand that arises naturally, as states become more socialized, is that the more sacrificial callings should be adequately paid: and this produces one of the acute "frontier" questions of our time. It arises because the state promises that what were previously ministries of mercy shall be extended to all who need them, at the charge of all those who do not. One would expect the supply of nurses, probation officers and teachers, among others, to be inadequate, as we seem to be finding it is: and we can try to fulfil the need only by appealing to motives which attract the average person to remunerative work. Indeed, these professions, like others, will combine to claim higher pay, often with justice as such claims go. One kind of dilemma which is produced by this appeared in some recent *Times* correspondence about teachers' salaries: a correspondent rightly observing that he could see no reason why sixth-form teachers should be better paid than qualified teachers of backward or blind children, if service to society were the criterion. But he went on to say that hard realities frustrate any effort to act on this moral judgment: for "honours graduates" are scarce human material, they take longer and cost more to train. They have an immense value in the general market for skilled service, where they can earn much more than in teaching, and of those who continue to teach many must be doing so from a sense of vocation which our society does little to encourage.

Poverty and Wealth

There was a time when we had a class system in which occupation and vocation were identified and payments were fixed by custom. Then, during the period of *laisser-faire*,

labour was a commodity and rewards were determined by the competition of the market, mitigated only by such charity, good feeling and mutual fairness as men chose to show one another. But to-day nearly all professions and occupations are organized with a view to guarding and forwarding their interests and it is the state that is becoming the arbiter of incomes. The state performs this function with the aim of equity, but subject to its own needs and the political pressure put upon it by organized owners and workers. As financially sovereign authority, it can meet any claim it decides to allow at the expense of all the other sections of society, who are thereby moved to make similar demands. The new method of regulating incomes is thus accompanied by the well-known "upward pressure" of both incomes and prices, heightening the pace of life and the instability of our world. The principal danger to the great modern experiment of social security is this urgency of each working unit of society to raise the price of its service against all. Actually, the opposite course—if employers and employed, professionals and owners all sought rather to reduce their pay than to raise it as high as the market will bear—would be more likely to raise the standard of life for all.

It is too much to expect that this paradox will be perceived in such a way as to redirect the desires of organized groups; it would be too contrary to their habitual assumptions; nor are men's motives at their best sufficiently free from self-interest to make clear-sightedness easy in a matter of this kind. Yet to Christian insight, it should be clear that the best work is precisely that which is done with no reward beyond itself; the best service that which cannot be bought. There is no more convincing witness to the truth of Christ than the will to poverty wherever it is seen: nor is its practice confined within religious orders. Were it not so rare, the leadership in economic life could reverse its present tendencies; moderating rather than raising money demands, and serving instead of seeking to exploit the occupations that lie nearest to nature and the earth. It was a great

movement inspired by poverty for God's sake that made possible the most powerful and productive of all civilizations, and whatever a renewal of that inspiration might effect, it would not be the impoverishment of mankind. Certainly it needs to begin at the top, but also to proceed downwards by example and permeate the spirit of the whole; our present concentration upon a "higher standard" of life is perhaps the worst of auguries for its realization. That may be a hard saying, and yet it needs to be said.

INTERIM

Iona

THE difficulty that the Church of Scotland finds in fixing its relation to the Iona Community is described by a Correspondent later in this number. The case illustrates conflicting forces that are at work in most Churches to-day, none of which has yet succeeded in bridging the gulf between its own organized activities and the common life of industrial society. Can they expect to do so by improving and extending their present methods and machinery; or does their only hope lie in stimulating and encouraging those who invent new and original ways of appealing to the unchurched brethren? Those who take the latter course have to be ready to take risks; they must often be, or appear to be, imprudent. To accommodate such efforts requires the relaxation of rules or waiving of regulations that have in the past served useful purposes, and this is a lot to ask of ecclesiastical administrators. Nor can these, on the other hand, expect endless patience from the pioneer when legalities get in the way of his enterprise.

Conflicts Old and New

Clashes between conservatives and radicals in the Churches to-day are not simply a manifestation of the tension between priests and prophets that has been continuous in Hebrew and Christian history.

Present instances differ from the most notorious cases of the past in at least one important respect. The disinterested prophet is seldom in conflict with corrupt or worldly priests or presbyters in this age, when ecclesiastics have little enough power to cling to, and are mostly devout men doing their best with dwindling resources in apathetic surroundings. As church reformers launch out into the deeps of industrial society there will be increasing conflict within the churches, not between their good and bad members, but between those who are concerned with goods of different kinds. *The Frontier* means to bear this in mind, although its interests and sympathies will generally be—as in the present case—with those who are breaking new ground and seeking liberty for promising experiments.

Niemöller and German Unity

There has been some sharp discussion in Germany over some statements of Dr. Martin Niemöller that were not much noticed in this country. In the *New York Herald Tribune* of December 14, 1949, he is reported as having said in an interview that " most Germans would choose unification of their country under a Communist dictatorship to the continued split of their nation. . . . Given the alternative of a continued split in Germany or the prospect of reuniting the country under a foreign dictatorship—even that of Russia—the Germans would prefer to take the risk of Communism. They would feel that they would have more chance of surviving as a nation under those circumstances ". The correspondent (Marguerite Higgins) added that " Mr. Niemöller made it plain that he hoped a third way could be found. There was no question but that the Eastern zone of Germany, if it had a free choice, would rush to join the West. . . . Under present circumstances the best possible solution would be for a committee of neutrals under the United nations to take over the occupation of the country, giving it the central government called for in the Potsdam agreement ". On December 16 the *Wiesbadener Kurier* published a further interview in which Dr. Niemöller remarked that the German Federal Republic had been " begotten in Rome and born in Washington " and on the 20th the Evangelische Pressedienst issued a démenti from Dr. Niemöller in reference to the " Higgins interview " declaring that it was in reply to a question as to Germany's attitude in a war between America and Russia that he had said that Germany would not fight against Russia " because we could not " and that everything should be done to prevent Germans fighting

against Germans—which led to his suggestions for internationalizing Germany.

What did he mean?

Both the original "Higgins interview", the "Rome-Washington" statement, and the démenti have let loose a storm of controversy particularly within the Evangelical Church. On January 16 Prof. Thielicke, the well-known Protestant theologian of Tübingen University, broadcast a detailed criticism of Niemöller's views. He thought that the difference, implied in the "démenti", between preferring Communist dictatorship to the "continued split" of Germany and preferring it to civil war between Germans, was no more than a "nuance". It must be remembered, he went on, that Niemöller is ideologically "dependent on Karl Barth" whose "sympathy for the East is well-known". In any case the whole controversy was complicated by the extreme difficulty of establishing what Niemöller did in fact say. "With all respect for the personality of Niemöller, for whom not only his own Church, but also countless Catholic Christians prayed without ceasing during his years of suffering, one must admit that his utterances have not been marked by clarity and consistency since 1945." Niemöller, Thielicke concluded, is an "over-simplifier" who "sees the enemy of what is sacred to him with the greatest clarity"—hence his heroic stand against the clear-cut menace of Nazism. But in the far more complicated post-war situation the "either-or" attitude is inadequate—hence the series of "gaffes" of which Niemöller has been guilty. (Perhaps it might be true to describe Niemöller as essentially Churchillian—if the thesis of Churchill's weakness as a peace-time statesman is conceded.)

Of pro-Niemöller statements, we may quote a notable rejoinder to Prof. Thielicke by Dr. Ehlers, an Evangelical pastor and member of the Federal Diet in Bonn. His main point (*Christ und Welt*, February 2) is that Niemöller's démenti rules out any question of a "Barthian sympathy for the Eastern power" and shows the courage of a clear-sighted realist facing the possibility of a Russo-American conflict involving Germans fighting against Germans, fathers against sons. "The most important thing, Dr. Ehlers concludes, is to avoid hostilities that might not destroy the Western and Eastern peoples, but would certainly destroy us." It would behove the Germans to face the reality of this danger rather than to indulge in largely personal attacks on Niemöller.

'THE CHRISTIAN ATTITUDE' TO THE U.S.A.

"WHAT is the Christian attitude to Germany?" has been a frequent subject of discussion in the last ten years. Recently it has been supplanted by the question of the Christian attitude to Russia. But it has rarely occurred to any one, in this country at least, that there might be a "Christian attitude" to the U.S.A.

The implication appears to be that it is necessary to define a Christian attitude to one's enemies or potential enemies, but that one may be expected to behave in a Christian manner to one's friends. History and present experience give little support for such an assumption, especially where nations are concerned. The famous wisecrack "Anglo-American relations are all right until somebody tries to improve them" has more truth as a criticism of the attempts at improvement than as a description of the state of those relations.

I have recently returned from a year's visit to America, and have been struck forcibly by the peculiarly carping and ungenerous attitude revealed in the numerous questions which people ask about conditions in that country. There is no lack of interest in America in this country, any more than there is any lack of interest in us over there. But many of the questions seem to be prompted by a desire to be assured that, if we are miserable, they are miserable too. People are relieved when they hear that, although the shops are full of meat, most families cannot afford it every day at the price. They are avid for atrocity stories about big business or race relations. They want to have it proved to them that, despite all appearances, the working man is much better off here than he is there.

Now there is certainly plenty to criticize in America. No one can live there for very long without being oppressed, in particular, by the infinite self-righteousness and self-satisfaction of the business community, especially in their attitude towards Europe. But it is very questionable whether an

attitude of critical disapproval is either the most appropriate or the most becoming on the part of any European country towards America at the present time. It is natural that English people in particular should feel a little like the elderly head of the family who has got into difficulties and who has been able to keep the old house together only at the price of accepting help from the brash young nephew who went out to make his fortune and has done indecently well. But it is downright silly that we should so often behave like him.

This attitude is much less in evidence in politics and economics than in some other spheres. This is partly due to the good sense and good temper shown by politicians, diplomats and industrialists and partly to the fact that we have had to adjust ourselves to realities in these fields in order to survive at all. But in the general field of social life, and in particular the cultural, the situation is very different. Here we can find compensation for our only too obvious political and economic dependence. They may take away our Old Masters but they cannot take away our traditions. Their colleges may be larger and wealthier, but every one knows that the standard is not so high. In America, culture, like everything else, is mass-produced. Their churches may be better attended, but what people get when they go to them is another story. In some things, at least, we remain the finest people in the world.

It may be objected that I am making too much of this. Even if it is true that English people sometimes speak like that, it may be argued, it is only the expression of a very natural mood, which comes and goes. In general, the two nations get along very well and most English people who visit America have a wonderful time. But this attitude is more insidious than is realized. For while it may not prevent us from having superficially pleasant relations with Americans it does prevent us from seeing our own task as a nation in relation to America as positively and constructively as we should. It is this, even more than the lack of generosity and

courtesy which it displays, which makes the typical British attitude towards America a problem from the Christian point of view.

America, which is bound to Britain and Europe by the closest of family ties, has a task of immeasurable difficulty and responsibility to fulfil in the day of her power. It is surely the plainest of duties that we should do our utmost to help her perform it adequately. Our own self-interest as well as hers obviously dictates that we should not withhold from her any insight or experience or knowledge which will be of any use to her, just as America's sense of both obligation and self interest has prompted her to lend assistance to Europe. The urgency of events have made us go a long way towards doing this in the political and economic realm. Envy and the desire to compensate for our lost supremacy still prevent us from doing it in the other realms I have mentioned.

Perhaps this attitude receives its most explicit ideological expression in the famous time-lag theory. It is a favourite notion of Europeans that America is always to be thought of as thirty years behind Europe in any serious branch of human activity. This is especially true in the cultural realm, although it is often suggested that it is also true in economics. The newest ideas in the arts, in philosophy and in theology are always born in Europe and always take at least a generation to percolate to America. America is the cultural dependent of Europe.

There is, of course, a great deal of truth in this, up to a point. But as a working rule for trying to understand America it is most dangerously misleading, for at least two reasons.

First, it prevents Europeans from facing the possibility that America may sometimes produce something quite new on its own. Europeans do not look at America with the idea that they may have something to learn. This is more true of people on the Continent than in Britain, especially the French, but the British are far from immune to this self-

flattery. Every one knows about the European influence on America but the American influence on Europe is often dismissed in academic circles as if it were identical with the influence of Hollywood. This is simply not true and it is a form of European provincialism which baffles and infuriates Americans more than anything else. The cultural influence of America on Europe along the whole range of life, from breakfast foods to the study of sociology, is profound, and Americans have the right to expect us to examine it critically for what it is.

The second reason is even more serious. The time-lag theory overlooks the distinctiveness of the American situation in history, with the distinctive temptations and opportunities that that involves. There are certain points of resemblance between America's situation to-day and that of England before 1914 but the differences are more important than the resemblances. Once more, this is clear enough in politics and economics. The American economy cannot pursue a policy of easy-going expansionism without immediately involving almost the whole of the rest of the world, and her political influence has to be exercised in an infinitely more menacing and combustible world than Britain knew in her heyday. But it is no less true in other spheres, where it is no less important that its truth should be seen.

This is particularly the case in the life of the Church. The American church situation to-day is something quite distinctive and it would be fatal to think of it too simply in terms of European parallels. Europe has much to offer to America to-day in the theological realm, both in Catholicism and in Protestantism, but the condition of its being able to give it is that European churchmen should realize that the American Church situation is not simply an outlying part of their own. The spiritual problem in Europe is that of a man being born again when he is old. The European churches are old churches set in the midst of old nations and they have to find both internal purification and renewal and a lost contact with the masses of their people, who have for

long gone their way virtually independently of them. Much of the work of European theology, and much of the study of the Ecumenical Movement, is directed towards this problem. The spiritual problem in most of America is very different. It is that of the rich man who yet desires to enter the Kingdom of God. There is no escaping the destiny of being a rich man on America's part. The rest of the world needs her superfluity if it is to know any peace and prosperity. This is true of Asia and Africa even more than it is of Europe. For America to throw away her wealth and power, as some of her would-be pure-minded Christian leaders want her to, is to betray the responsibilities of her position. Yet she can only use that wealth and power aright, and save her own soul, if she learns how to be poor in spirit.

The whole resources of the full Gospel will be needed to enable America to solve this problem, which no other people in Christian history has ever had to face before on such a scale. The churches of Europe, which have had more opportunity than the young and expanding churches of America to achieve a theological position which takes account of all the ambiguities of the Christian attitude towards power, can do much to help the churches of America in this task. But they can only do so if they take the trouble to see the American situation for what it is and do not force that situation into the mould of the European spiritual crisis.

This is not true all over the country but most American churches are very young churches. They have many faults but a self-satisfied refusal to make experiments and to learn from others is not among them. If European churchmen, and this is particularly true of British churchmen because of our natural affinity and our common language, take the trouble to understand something of the distinctiveness of the American Church scene they will find that anything they have to offer will be eagerly received. I believe that they will also find considerable refreshment for their own spirits in the youthful vigour, enterprise, and courage of the one

group of churches in the world which are growing more rapidly than their country's population.

It is appropriate to add in this journal that one of the most worth-while tasks awaiting the Ecumenical Movement is the promotion of effective contact on Frontier lines between laymen responsibly concerned for secular affairs on both sides of the Atlantic.

DANIEL JENKINS.

GEORGE MACLEOD AND THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

From a Scottish Correspondent

THE name of George Macleod is a symbol, among those who are watching for signs of change and of power within the Churches, of something new and exciting. This is true, at least, beyond the confines of Scotland and in fact it may be said that his name, and the name of the Iona Community of which he is the founder, represent more than can ever be analysed, far less organized. The Iona Community is a symbol of a certain achievement, but also and more important, of semi-articulated hopes and desires among Christians in all parts of the world.

This symbolic quality which clings to the names of Macleod and Iona makes it difficult for any clear view to be obtained of the tussle which has recently been going on between the Church of Scotland—in the courts of the General Assembly and the Presbytery of Glasgow and in the proliferating committees of these courts—and the aims of George Macleod.

The immediate issues are easy to put simply. They concern the admission of a Minister to a charge in the Church of Scotland. The Act which governs such admissions is clearly framed to ensure that a parish has proper care from its minister. Any minister who has undertaken employ-

ment not subject to the jurisdiction of the Church must first relinquish that employment before his " call " to a congregation is in order. In 1948 Dr. Macleod was called to the vacant charge of Govan Old, a compact industrial parish on Clydeside where he had formerly served until 1939, when he resigned in order to become Leader of the Iona Community. There was not complete unanimity among the members of the congregational Vacancy Committee, nor in the final voting by the congregation. The " call " itself was signed by 335 members and 14 adherents out of a total electoral roll of over 2,000. (It would be interesting to learn how this proportion, which certainly seems small, compares with the average proportion of votes cast in any such election, but this would lead us too far into an examination of the religious condition of Scottish parishes.)

The validity of the election, however, was questioned in the competent Presbytery on the grounds that Dr. Macleod made his acceptance conditional on his retaining active connection with the Iona Community, and, further, omitted to present a certificate showing that he had relinquished his employment as Leader of the Iona Community. The General Assembly which met in May, 1949, decided that the election could not be upheld unless Dr. Macleod fulfilled the normal conditions for any minister of the Church of Scotland. Thereafter a fresh attempt was made by the Presbytery to have Dr. Macleod installed at Govan on the normal terms for any parish minister of the Church of Scotland—i.e. without conditions on his part and accompanied by a certificate of eligibility. These terms were rejected by Dr. Macleod and in consequence the vacant charge of Gowan Old was filled, under the Presbytery's special prerogative where the congregational committee is unable to make a decision within a set term, by another minister. Dr. Macleod will not, at least in the foreseeable future, return to Govan.

Why did he refuse to fulfil the normal requirements ? He wished to link the idea of his Iona experiment with the

practical needs of a large and busy parish, a typical modern industrial area. The conditions he proposed, namely, that he should be given a certain latitude in the use of his time, in order to continue to help in the work of the Iona Community, are seen by him not as a dangerous precedent leading to the horrid peril of a divided loyalty between an "outside" employment and Church employment, but as a pioneer effort to bring back the industrial areas of Scotland into obedience to the Gospel. He proposed his conditions because he wished to make an honest statement about the time he would give to parochial duties at Govan. Unfortunately the Presbytery was bound to reject any such conditions. It is necessary to see that the ingredients of real tragedy are here present. Though willing to give its ministers the greatest latitude in their work, the one thing the Presbytery cannot give up is the right to intervene should it consider that a parish is being neglected. On Dr. Macleod's view the Church of Scotland asked too high a price for his acceptance of the charge of Govan Old, and he preferred to remain as Leader of the Community.

So far the issue is plain, and it is one about which Scotland has not been in doubt for many generations: absentee ministers, pluralities, sinecures are to be discouraged by every legal means. It is possible and indeed necessary to ask, however, whether as a consequence of the Govan decision a tighter rein ought not in all logic and orderliness to be kept on those other ministers who hold posts within the organization of the Church along with their parishes: paid posts (as Dr. Macleod's in the Iona Community is *not*) which are undoubtedly veiled forms of plurality.[1] It is further necessary to ask whether requests from ministers

[1] I have been assured by a friendly critic that there is machinery in operation to keep a tighter rein on such ministers, and that in any case there is no real parallel between their case and Dr. Macleod's, for these ministers have undertaken such jobs by Presbyterial permission. The implication is that Presbyterial decisions are necessarily just and proper.

settled in parishes to undertake special and temporary tasks outside the jurisdiction of the Church ought not also to be scrutinized more carefully. The Church of Scotland has long deprived itself of the varieties of service possible for ordained men which are provided elsewhere, and this is not the place to argue the merits of other ecclesiastical systems which can provide posts other than pastoral charges for the special exercise of dedicated talents by their clergy.

Such is the outline of the story which has awakened interest throughout the world. On the facts of the "Govan Case", which is now settled, it is unnecessary to be extravagant with sympathy either for Dr. Macleod or for the hard-pressed ministers and laymen who have kept the ecclesiastical machinery going. The real issue has not yet been reached; that is, the relation of the Iona Community to the Church of Scotland. The Govan case is no more than a prologue to the issue which will face the General Assembly when it hears the report of its special committee on the Community. To do more than attempt to expose the issue at the moment would be injudicious; yet a few general comments are possible.

The very name of the Iona Community indicates links with the Celtic part of Scottish history which are more sentimental than actual. However interesting and novel the work which goes on each summer on the island where St. Columba had his headquarters, this is not the real work of the Community. There is no doubt refreshment and inspiration to be drawn from such an Antaean contact with the past, and a praiseworthy piety is exercised in the rebuilding of the antique Abbey, but Dr. Macleod himself would be the last to maintain that that island work is central. In truth his aims are quite practical, even to being "untheological", and filled with an acute sense of the needs of modern society. Govan is the real type of George Macleod's sphere, not Iona. For the concern of his Community is that the Gospel should be presented not in terms of individuals but in terms of the community of believers active

within society, entering the situation of modern urbanized man with new techniques of challenge and help.

I have called the Iona Community "untheological" in its emphasis, but that is rather owing to its lack of an explicit systematic statement of its aim and basis than to any lack of coherence or vision. The instinct of Christians in every land is, I believe, not at fault in this: George Macleod is certainly one of the great men of the Church of Scotland, and possibly a prophet of a coming stirring of the dry bones. That he is still within the fold of the Church of Scotland, says much both for himself and for his patient fellow-presbyters who have tried, and are trying, to find a "formula" by which his Community can be brought within the jurisdiction of the Church, while retaining the freedom essential for experiment and advance. It is not a new problem in the Church to have to deal with an uprising of the Spirit whether within or without its walls. It would be unusual if there were not tensions and difficulties. We may at least express the hope that the Assembly, which has already encouraged the Iona Community and its founder in more than one explicit pronouncement, will find more than a formula for dealing with the Iona Community. The Assembly's attitude will do more than determine the fate of one as yet inchoate and not very widespread "community": it will also indicate the destiny of the Church of Scotland, and indirectly of the Church in other lands, in its dealings with the whole modern situation in which words like "secularism" and "Communism" and "proletariat" are mere shadowy indications of a seething human situation.

George Macleod, in one of the few striking phrases which emerged from the protracted story of the Govan case, himself said: "It is natural for any man, active in the Gospel, to fill up his time." In his work may be seen the plenitude of the Spirit's activity. For him, if the Church permit it, there is still plenty of room; Govan is not the only industrial parish in Scotland. The spirits must be tried whether they are of God; but also, no one knows whither

the Spirit leads. It is very trying to be part of an ecclesiastical machine—both for the engineers and for the passengers in the machine. But there is no other mode of advancing, and it is therefore to be hoped that after the lurching prologue of Govan the play will unfold with power. The metaphor is strained: nor is it even just to speak here of new wine and old bottles: and again it is too much to speak of the uncomfortable prophet Amos and Amaziah the priest of Bethel. To abandon metaphor, I repeat that the Church of Scotland is here dealing with one of its great men, who is also one of its great churchmen. That the Church of Scotland knows this is the most hopeful augury for the issue.

THE REFUGEES IN AUSTRIA

THE CONFERENCE OF SALZBURG, 1950

THE Conference on Refugees in Austria, which was called by the World Council of Churches and met in Salzburg the 17th–19th of January, was the logical successor to a conference held last year in Hamburg. That earlier conference was concerned with Germany and, for the purpose of study, narrowed the field in the first instant, to the British Zone. It was a conference of supreme importance for the refugee problem. The aims had been clearly defined as to verify the facts, to give wide publicity to the true situation and to develop practical proposals for solution. All these aims were achieved and more. At Hamburg a new impetus was given towards solving the enormous refugee problem. The German authorities were given new courage to tackle it, the German churches were quickened to a new sense of their responsibility and the world saw that the predicament of the refugees was one of such vast proportions that only the resources of the world could relieve it. The problem remains, but the world can no longer profess

ignorance of it and those whose representatives signed the Potsdam Agreement are aware of their responsibility for ten million refugees.

Because of the outstanding success of this conference, it was decided to call a similar one at Salzburg this year. The plan for this conference was closely modelled on the earlier one with certain important differences made necessary by the different nature of the problem.

In Austria, the largest number of refugees are Volksdeutsche. These are the descendants of those many Germans who, from the eleventh century onwards emigrated to Eastern and South-eastern Europe. In the eighteenth and nineteenth century particularly, many colonists were invited by landowners in Russia and Eastern Europe to settle on their land and till it. Most of these emigrants lived in closed communities, preserving their German language and culture. Hitler saw in them important allies for the expansion of his influence and was the first to call them " Volksdeutsche ". It was a title which many of them bore proudly. With the Second World War their position became difficult, and, with the collapse of Hitler's State, disastrous. Most of them had been loyal to their country of residence until it came under German occupation. Then they found their German kinship stronger than they had imagined. With the retreat of the German armies, many went to Germany. The majority, especially in the Sudetenland, Jugoslavia, Hungary and Poland, remained behind in what they had always believed to be their home. They were interned, and some deported to Russia. Under the Potsdam Agreement (Article XIII), which was signed by representatives of the U.S.A., the U.S.S.R. and Great Britain, it was decided to transfer the German population of Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary to Germany. At the same time, the Jugoslavs and Roumanians began to expel a considerable proportion of their German-speaking people. Many of these came to Austria and were still there when the transfer of Germans from Austria to Germany was stopped because of shortage of

accommodation. Since then only Volksdeutsche who were separated from their families have been moved, and by no means all of these.

The situation now is that there are approximately 300,000 Volksdeutsche in Austria and 16½ per cent of these are still living in camps. These camps are invariably overcrowded and the conditions of the Volksdeutsche, even outside camps, are extremely bad. Some thousands of Volksdeutsche children are still living in Jugoslavia, separated from their parents in Austria, and educated in State Children's Homes. It has proved almost impossible to reunite these children with their parents. For those Volksdeutsche who are unable to support themselves, there is a measure of State care, but this is quite inadequate. Many foreign relief agencies have co-operated and their help has been essential.

In addition to these 300,000 there are many thousands of Displaced Persons still in Austria. These are the foreign workers whom the Nazis brought in to forced labour and who cannot now return to their homes. Although their condition is not a very happy one, they have been supported by the International Refugee Organization and many have already found new homes overseas. The aid given by I.R.O. comes to an end in June and the number of Displaced Persons who can be placed abroad is rapidly dwindling. When aid comes to an end, there will probably be 12,500 of these people left in Austria.

Briefly, that is the situation which faced the conference, and all the details were in the hands of the delegates when they met at Salzburg. The list of those present immediately gave authority and value to the conference. The Austrian Government was represented by Dr. Just the Minister for the Interior, Dr. Arndt of the Central Office for Volksdeutsche and many others; the Austrian Churches were represented by Catholic, Evangelical and Free Church leaders; Germany was represented both in Church and in State; the World Council of Churches and its member Churches were represented; and so were the Occupying

Powers. A glance round the room at any session revealed an amazing combination of contrasting authorities. What other conference has seen together, in free discussion, the Minister for Refugees in West Germany, the Austrian Minister for the Interior, the Evangelical Bishop of Austria and the head of the Roman Catholic "Caritas"? To have these men, of such widely different experience and authority together for three days to think about the refugee problem of Austria was itself an achievement.

One contrast with the previous Hamburg conference was immediately felt. In Salzburg we were in a Catholic city, and both the refugees and the indigenous population of Austria are largely Catholic. Because of this it was right that the Roman Catholic Church should be fully represented in a way that it was not at Hamburg. This greater degree of co-operation was welcomed by the World Council of Churches. The Conference opened on the 17th January with two parallel acts of worship: the Pontifical Mass by the Prince Archbishop of Salzburg in Kajetanerkirche and a Service of Intercession by Bishop May of the Protestant Church of Austria in the Christuskirche.

The first session began with a Formal Opening at which the authority of the conference was at once made evident. The Austrian Chancellor who, because of illness was not able to be present, sent a message to the conference in which he expressed real concern for its work. One paragraph from his message may be translated as follows: "I hope that through the work of this Conference the Austrian Government may receive important suggestions and support for its work in solving the refugee problem. Please receive our assurance, that we are deeply concerned to find a solution for these problems, which cause us great anxiety. Such a solution can only be carried out on a humane Christian basis."

The Archbishop of Salzburg spoke first. He welcomed the conference in the name of that Church which has its centre at Rome and made three important points that were

to be remembered in later sessions. 1. These refugees, who speak the same language as the Austrians, are not foreigners but brothers. 2. Austria has already done much to help them through "Caritas" and other agencies. 3. The plight of children without parents calls us to make every effort to reunite families now separated by national frontiers. He was followed by the Protestant Bishop of Austria, who reminded us that the refugees had already suffered five years of misery and disappointment. Like many others, he stressed the power for good that these refugees could be in Austria, which indeed needed them. The Protestant Church in Austria, he said, has pursued the three following principles and will not change them. 1. It accepts no difference between Austrian and refugee. 2. It accepts no difference between Displaced Persons and Volksdeutsche. 3. It assumes that most of the refugees cannot return to their homes and must remain in Austria. He spoke to these three points and outlined the work which the Protestant Church had already done for refugees in Austria.

The Landeshauptmann and the Burgermeister of Salzburg each welcomed the conference and wished it well.

The Rev. Henry Carter, chairman of the conference, replied to these good wishes, and outlined the work that was to be done and the lines which should be followed. He stressed the importance of a sober consideration of the situation lest it should raise hopes that could not be fulfilled. The Volksdeutscher was obviously the big problem, and certain aspects of it must be outlined at the conference. The first plenary session began at once and all of the first day as well as part of the second was taken up with papers presented to the Conference.

The substance of these papers will be published later and will repay careful study. Meanwhile, it is sufficient to outline their main points. After a very clear statement of the "Aims and Purpose of the Conference" by Henry Carter, we had a careful analysis of the present situation of the Volksdeutsche by Dr. Stewart Hermann and then a largely

defensive and factual paper by Dr. Just on "Austria's Problem". Both these papers needed closer study and the delegates had the text in their hands before the first day was over. These two papers helped us to see the problem from the point of view of the refugees and also from the point of view of the country that had received them. They did not conflict, but merely underlined the problem and gave further evidence of the absolute need of international aid and sympathy. This led us to one of the most moving, but least factual, of the papers of the Conference: "The International Task" by Odd Nansen. The honoured name of Nansen gave weight to the paper, although at times it seemed remote from the 1950 situation in Austria. The two important suggestions which emerged were (1) that a refugee passport be issued—an echo of the old "Nansen" passport, but less valuable in these days of visas and entry permits, (2) the establishment of an International Loan Bank to help refugees establish themselves. This paper by Odd Nansen, and two others that followed it were intended to be the starting points for the three proposed working parties. The two papers were "Austria's Task" by Dr. Sobek of the Austrian Government and "The Church's Task" by Monsignor Weinbacher of the Roman Catholic Church.

It was, therefore, with ample material and wide experience that the three working parties began their intensive work. By the third day of the conference they all had written proposals to lay before the other delegates and, after some discussion, these were accepted unanimously. The proposals will form the basis of a report to be submitted by the World Council of Churches to all governments, churches and organizations concerned. A little lower down, I will summarize the proposals submitted by the working parties; but it is essential to understand the way in which these conclusions were reached. The heart of the conference lay in the meetings of the working parties, the drafting committees, private sessions of delegates concerned with special aspects and personal meetings. This Conference was no dead

committee functioning like a logical machine, but a living contact between people whose minds and personalities clashed before they agreed.

The working party on "Austria's Task" included high officials in the Austrian Government, who were taking decisions for future action as they were debating proposals. It is natural that they should view the subject, which was really their own task, differently from those who came from outside. It was, therefore, with great pleasure that we read the proposals of this working party, surprised that such definite steps were proposed and knowing that the people who had agreed upon them were able to carry them out.

The working party on the "International Task" ran early into sharp disagreement between Austrian and German delegates. Every effort was made to concentrate upon Austria, but the difficulties of her larger neighbour could not be entirely ignored. We agreed to see Austria from the international point of view, but not to look at the world from Austria. The initial disagreement was eventually overcome to the extent of agreeing to proposals that were worth making. The concern expressed in the terms of reference given to the proposed High Commissioner for Refugees soon became the dominant theme. If this office of the United Nations is set up in October, two weaknesses must quickly be remedied. (1) The High Commissioner will have no funds at his disposal. This is inevitable, but he will need to have easy access to funds if his wide responsibilities are to be anything more than a name. (2) The old description of a refugee, which includes only Displaced Persons, and leaves out all groups of German origin, still remains. If this continues the proposed High Commissioner will have to deal with only a tiny fraction of the refugees of Europe and millions will remain outside his protection. This description must now be widened to include all people who have been forced by political events to leave their homes and seek refuge among strangers—regardless of their race or language.

The working party on " The Church's Task " agreed not to separate as had been proposed into two groups for Catholics and Protestants respectively and thus gave unity to the Conference. What they proposed, therefore, was all the more valuable. Viewed quite apart from the content of the proposals, this intensive work and thought together was an achievement in interchurch relationships and a good omen for the future of work in Austria.

The recommendations made by the first working party on Austria's Task urged the Austrian Government:—

1. To issue a statute guaranteeing to the refugees in Austria equality with Austrian citizens with regard to social services and labour rights.

2. To take special measures, meanwhile, for those Volksdeutsche who are in need of public relief for their subsistence.

3. To grant Naturalization to a number of intellectuals proportionate to the number of farmers, artisans and industrial workers among Volksdeutsche eligible for Austrian citizenship.

4. To open the frontiers to all refugees who could show serious human or legal reasons for emigration.

In addition, proposals were made,

1. For six schemes of settlement by creating small holdings and independent craft industries.

2. For additional money to be allocated from the Marshall Aid Fund to provide work for Volksdeutsche and thus increase Austria's production.

The recommendations made by the second working party, on " The International Task " included the following :—

1. That the voluntary relief organizations should continue their aid, so far as possible, to help the Austrian Government fulfil her responsibilities towards the aged and sick.

2. That special attention should be given to the urgent need for reuniting families and communities, especially arranging for (*a*) the exchange of members of refugee families and groups (e.g. Bukovina) between Germany and Austria, (*b*) the return of thousands of Volksdeutsche children in Jugoslavia to their parents and near relations in Austria.

3. That money internationally raised should be used in the first instance for the resettlement of Volksdeutsche on the land in Austria and secondly for emigration.

4. That emigration which is necessary should be carefully planned in co-operation with the proposed High Commissioner for Refugees through responsible organizations.

5. That the possibility be explored of establishing an international loan fund for the settlement, education and emigration of refugees in Austria.

The third working party, on "The Church's Task", speaking on behalf of Catholic and Protestants, appealed to "all people of the world and their governments, and not least to those who have shared in the responsibility for rendering homeless millions of human beings in Europe to take some steps to solve this problem. The Evangelical Relief Organization and the Catholic Relief Organization (Evangelische Hilfswerk and Caritas) are prepared to continue their work. The Austrian Churches will further co-operate and give especial attention to housing and provision of work". The recommendation, made in some detail, asked the World Council of Churches to "appeal to the conscience of Christians throughout the world, reminding them of the distress of the refugees and of the work of the Austrian Churches for the spiritual and material relief of these sorely tried people".

E. H. ROBERTSON.

REVIEWS

TWENTY-FIVE O'CLOCK

WE are perhaps getting a little tired of, or inured to, novels, stories or descriptions of Concentration Camps, Torture, Political Inquisitions and the rest. But a novel has recently appeared in France which is in a category of its own.[1] It is by a Rumanian, one time Secretary to the Legation for Cultural Relations in the Rumanian Foreign Office, and a student of philosophy and theology; and the book is prefaced by the philosopher, M. Gabriel Marcel. It is a terrible book, as terrible as *The Dark Side of the Moon*, and other atrocity stories; it is at moments a trifle hysterical, and often repetitious; but it is quite as important a work as Mr. Koestler's *Darkness at Noon*, with a humanity and even a humour that that novel lacked. Its first appearance is in a French translation—it naturally could not appear in Rumania—and it is to be hoped that it will be translated into other languages. By November, 1949, it had sold nearly 50,000 copies in France: and it will no doubt be widely read in this country.

It is impossible to summarize its complex plot, but in a sentence it is, ostensibly, "about" two Rumanians who spend some thirteen years in one Concentration Camp or another. Iohann Moritz is a peasant; Traian Koruga, son of a village priest, is an "intellectual". But they pursue somewhat parallel courses, which meet tangentially from time to time. Iohann is first arrested because of the petty spite of a village policeman, and accidentally classed as a Jew. Once he is entered in the dossiers as a Jew, he *is* a Jew—the unavailing efforts of his friends to prove that he is nothing of the sort are one of the ironies of the tale. Traian, on the other hand, is originally interned by Croats, after the capitulation of Rumania; and then, when Croatia is occupied by Tito's forces, he and his wife are transferred to Austria, then to Germany, then to Czechoslovakia. After the fall of Germany the wheel turns full-circle for both Traian and the peasant, Iohann (who by devious routes has ended up in the German army, helping French prisoners to escape!) For now they are both classed as Enemy Aliens, and are imprisoned in American Detention Camps. Here again is the irony of the European situation: Iohann, a simple

[1] *La Vingt-Cinquieme Heure*, by C. Virgil Gheorghiu. Transl. from the Rumanian by M. Saint-Come. In the series "Feux Croises", directed by Gabriel Marcel. (Paris, Plon., 1949. 390 fr.)

peasant, who has been suspected of being a Jew, has helped Jewish and French prisoners to escape at different times, and in the beginning was taken from his village only by a miscarriage of justice, is now classed as a " war criminal ". Traian, whose wife is a Jewess, who with her has tramped hundreds of kilometres from the East to escape the Russian Terror and reach the refuge of the West, has a Rumanian passport, therefore is Rumanian, therefore is an Enemy Alien. In the Camps organized by the Western Powers it is Traian Koruga who has the worst time. He is separated from his wife, he goes on hunger-strike and as a result is taken to a ward for lunatics and threatened not only with forcible feeding but with cardiazol injections. In the end he gives up hope and deliberately walks out into forbidden ground towards the barbed wire, where he is shot by Polish sentinels.

There are some unforgettable scenes in this quickly moving tale. The early pictures of village life—on its happy as well as its brutal side —assure us that even brutality there is somehow more genuine and human than the deadening impersonality of the industrialized and bureaucratized world. At least there is room there for the purely spontaneous gesture of sympathy which may be of no practical utility —as when Traian and his father, the old priest, both get wet needlessly, when they accompany young Moritz to rescue Moritz's fiancée, Suzanna; " God too made a useless gesture like this," thought Traian, " when He created the universe. God made things of no practical utility; yet these are the most beautiful things. The life of man is a useless creation. . . . Yet in spite of its inutility it is quite unsurpassable."

But perhaps the most moving is the end. Iohann has actually been cleared of " war crime " in the Nuremberg investigations, and manages to return to his Rumanian village. Here he hopes to remake his life with Susanna and their three children (two of them his, one a half-Russian resulting from poor Susanna's violation by Russian soldiers.) But alas, their hope lasts exactly eighteen hours. Once more war breaks out, and he and his family are again interned in an American Camp. There by a chance he meets Nora, Traian's wife—or rather, widow, since Traian was shot by the Polish guards. She is also still interned, but has been raised to a better position as an interpreter in the Foreign Recruiting Office. The American officer in charge there is anxious to show that all the refugees from Eastern Europe who have volunteered for service in the Western forces have done so because they believed in the sacred cause of Democracy, Liberalism and

Progress. She knows it is nothing of the sort : they have volunteered merely because that was their only way of escaping from the Russians. The American officer fetches in the latest-arrived refugee family, in order to prove his point. It happens to be Iohann Moritz, Susanna, and the three children. Nora now realizes that she can get special treatment for them if they will only pretend that their arrival was due to enthusiasm for Democracy, Liberalism and Progress. She talks to them in their language, and then tells the American, Lieut. Lewis, that their reply was indeed that they ardently supported Democracy, . . . etc. Lewis is delighted, promises to help them, and insists on having their photographs taken as representatives of the refugee volunteers. The book ends with a deep irony : Iohann Moritz, tears in his eyes as he thinks of all he and the others have been through, stands before the camera while Lewis tries to pose him, saying " Keep smiling ! Smiling ! Smiling ! "

The conclusion is deeply pessimistic : Europe is doomed, and little hope is held out for her recovery. But the author is a Christian, even though with an almost exaggerated eschatological outlook of an Eastern Orthodox type. The veneration for Mother Earth, so characteristic of Dostoievsky, appears in Traian's death : " His cheek and lips (as he fell) were glued to the warm earth, with a gesture of tenderness, a gesture of friendship, with a gesture of total surrender—of love." And in the deeply sympathetic treatment of the old priest, Father Koruga, we see how the novelist links the passion of his characters to the Passion of Christ. No doubt he has written too near the events he has experienced—and we are told that many of the horrible occurrences in the book were actually witnessed by himself or his wife. This results in an occasional lapse into lecturing and essay-writing. (It is significant that the same fault is to be found in the late George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, which has certain similarities with M. Gheorghiu's book, though it has none of the latter's warm-heartedness.) But the dramatic moments in the book—the coming of horror to the village, the accounts of physical suffering, the superb death of Traian Koruga (who fell " without noise, like an over-coat which slips from a cupboard and falls in a heap on the floor "), and the brilliant ironic ending —are all finely conceived and cleanly executed. And over all hangs the magnificent sombre cloak of doom : " For it is Twenty-five o'Clock. The moment when all attempts at rescue have become useless. Even the coming of a Messiah would solve nothing. It isn't the last hour : it 's one hour after the last hour."

M. Jarrett-Kerr, C.R.

'CHRISTIANITY AFTER FREUD'

Christianity after Freud. B. G. SANDERS. (Geoffrey Bles. 8/6.)

Mr. Sanders presents his book purely as "an *argumentum ad hominem*". He is concerned to refute Freud's theories as to the origin and nature of religion, and of the Christian religion in particular—as these are presented in the latter author's *Totem and Tabu* and his *Moses and Monotheism*. Mr. Sanders is prepared, for the sake of argument, to accept not only Freud's psycho-analytical theories in their totality, but his anthropological theories as well. He rejects only the philosophical premise which Freud has in reality assumed as an axiom before commencing his argument. This assumed premise is that God does not exist, and that the phenomena of religious experience are therefore to be explained in purely human terms. Mr. Sanders, taking his stand on the position that Science is competent neither to prove nor to disprove the existence of God, attempts the experiment of re-examining the psycho-analytical theory of religion, but assuming the existence, instead of the non-existence, of God as his primary premise. If we are prepared to admit this, he maintains, we shall find, not only that there is no contradiction between the fundamental Christian dogmas and the findings of psycho-analysis, but that the latter can do much to illuminate our understanding of the former.

There are certain initial disadvantages in Mr. Sanders' method, of which he himself is doubtless aware. Belief or disbelief in God is not really something which can be postulated as a purely abstract premise in an argument of this kind, but arises out of experience, and evaluation of experience, which transcends purely intellectual categories. The sceptic, while agreeing that Freud, if he indeed assumed in advance God's non-existence in his critique of religion, was guilty of a logical fallacy, would still be entitled to maintain that (remembering the principle of Occam's razor) the category of the divine does not have to be introduced before the argument itself shows it to be necessary. Mr. Sanders' thesis has, indeed, something of a formalized, quasi-scholastic air. Its value will lie in its suggesting the possibility of a different point of view to those who have come to accept the Freudian theory as a coherent and universally applicable set of dogmas, rather than for the independent enquirer. But such dogmatic Freudianism (constituting, as Mr. Sanders terms it, "the new Gnosis") is by no means uncommon—especially, perhaps, among the non-professional students of psycho-analysis. I cannot help feel-

ing, however, that should any of the latter be persuaded by Mr. Sanders' arguments, they might be in danger, in rejecting the shortcomings of the Freudian point of view, of merely exchanging one set of abstract propositions for another, instead of gaining a living religious faith.

Nevertheless, within the limitations suggested above, Mr. Sanders' book offers much that is commendable. It is of value, if only in suggesting a series of analogies whereby the dogmas of Christianity may be rendered more readily comprehensible to those who have grown up in a post-Freudian and post-Frazerian intellectual climate. Mr. Sanders follows Freud in tracing a parallel between the historical development of religion in humanity as a whole, and the development of a neurosis in the individual, but differs sharply from him in his identification of the particular stages of this development. Thus, the original traumatic experience of the human race is traced, not to the murder of the human father by the members of the hypothetical prehistoric horde, but to Adam's disobedience, whereby he lost the direct consciousness of God. The imagery of the Biblical myth of the Fall is suggestive of the sexual nature of Adam's sin, but, Mr. Sanders suggests, it was primarily the sin of Pride, since Man, through his sexual nature, sought to abrogate to himself the creative power and the immortality which belonged essentially to God (here Mr. Sanders' argument seems to be closer to Adler than to Freud). After the Fall, Man's knowledge of God assumed the nature of a repressed memory, and the totemistic and other rites of primitive religion represented, in psycho-analytical terms, the partial return of this repressed material, the workings of which Mr. Sanders compares to that of a compulsion neurosis. But the Christian revelation represents, not, as for Freud, the final phase of this neurosis, but the ultimate liberation from it. For Christ, as Incarnate God, and conceived without the taint of Original Sin inseparable, since the Fall, from the act of human procreation, was alone able to achieve the true analysis of the soul by revealing the source of its disease, and to suffer the projection of the original rebellion, of Man against the Divine Father, upon himself. The historically unique rôle of Christianity, and its close relation to earlier religions, are thus brought into focus with each other—as against Freud's interpretation of Christianity as the final expression of the Son's rebellion against the Father, and the former's supersession of the latter. This last idea of Freud's, indeed, is surprisingly inept for so generally acute and imaginative a thinker. It ignores entirely the cardinal importance of the Trinitarian doctrine

in Christianity, and is only explicable when we remember that Freud's own religious roots were outside that tradition.

The Jewish background of Freud's thought, as of that of Karl Marx, is, of course, of the greatest significance. The work of both men is an example of the highly creative rôle which the Hebraic tradition has to play in Western culture, off-setting the anti-historical and idealistic tendencies of the Hellenistic tradition. Freud's picture of the murder of the Primal Father, and his reconstruction of the life of Moses, though presented as scientific theories, are, in fact, re-statements of the Old Testament historical myths of the Fall, and of the giving of the Law. Unless accepted as myths, they can hardly hope to survive the criticisms of anthropology and archaeologicy. Mr. Sanders' Christian re-statement of Freudianism makes both necessary and intelligible the acceptance of the Fall, the Incarnation, and the Virgin Birth, as historical events, taking place in Time, and of the Sacraments of the Christian Church as real vehicles of Grace. Some Christians, alarmed by the materialism of Freud, have sought for the basis of an apologetic in the rival psychological theories of Jung. But the latter, though in general friendly to religious concepts where the Freudians are frankly hostile, often tends to give a merely ideal sanction to the basic tenets of Christianity. A too uncritical acceptance of Jungism might well lead to a revival, not of Christian faith, but of those oriental types of Gnosticism which were widespread in the early centuries of the Church. For this reason, such courageous attempts as that of Mr. Sanders to assimilate to Christian thinking the essentially Hebraic and historic consciousness of Freudianism deserve the greatest attention.

JOHN HEATH-STUBBS.

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

THE VILLAGE COMMUNITY

Dear Sirs,

Mr. Murry does not articulate the deep dumb wants of the countryman. He is far removed from him in thought and feeling. As a sensitive intellectual he pursues the "significance" of things with a cerebral ferocity and exaltation that finds its hot-blooded counterpart in the countryman's mad stick-waving chase of harvest rabbits or helter-skelter rats at a threshing. (Where this old-time custom still lingers on.) Yet Mr. Murry may be right about the village hall. He may know better than the villager what is going on in the latter's

subconscious? But for me the problem of the spiritual future of the village is something like this.

Not very long ago the village had within its own boundaries a great number of foci for different parts of its life. Now the villager's interests in business and pleasure so often lie outside the parish, weakening its corporate life. The N.F.U., the N.U.A.W., the Y.F.C., the W.I., the Choral Society and ambitious drama club cover areas much larger than the parish. And yet we live cheek by jowl in a strong solution of gossip. There is a greater need than ever to bind these secondary loyalties under one comprehensive one. The Church would provide it by worship—what will the sponsors of the Village Hall provide? Our Annual General Meeting is very badly attended and not uplifting.

Mr. Murry has given me the impression once or twice before this, that he regards our Lord as a precursor of the democratic way. It is fitting then that he complacently beholds, as he thinks he does, the village community centre superseding the Church and the cultural authority of its gentleman parson. It is here that the modern villagers will express their will-to-community (and their will to schism) without any shared assumptions except those that persist from unselfconscious tradition. How long will these last? C. S. Orwin regrets the passing of a quality in the countryman's life: the carter's pride in his team, the exuberant joy in his skill that made the thatcher ornament his rick, etc. Other country observers, A. G. Street and H. J. Massingham, take up the same strain. (And I suspect it is the real gaffers who remember what happened in old man Banham's day!)

The spiritual problem for the countryside is the revival of public worship so that this sorely-tested neighbourhood may gather in homage to what really endures—"Thou art the same and thy years shall not fail"—as it faces whatever the future has in store. Will the village gather without a personal leader? I hardly think so. Therefore re-organization is very important indeed. Suppose over a rural deanery we put a fully-trained man who has no other duty except to guide and assist the village parsons of his deanery. Suppose that each of these men was fully ordained but self-supporting in a trade or occupation for which he was trained. This is a residential but non-stipendiary clergy. Obviously much thought would be needed before starting such a scheme, but it is a possible re-organization. Maybe the parson who emerges is not like his nineteenth-century forbear, but he could be a real "deputy of Christ for the reducing of men to the obedience

of God " in the coming times when the burden of literacy lays on the working-man the duty of book-learning and the bell calls him to worship as urgently as it did when he was a peasant living under thumb and by thumb.

PETER RALPH-BOWMAN.

MID-CENTENARY DAYS

Dear Sirs,

If I am not mistaken, the " midmost day of the twentieth century " (when you promised your first number) will be 1st January, 1951; nevertheless I trustfully send you now my subscription for *The Frontier*.

You probably realize that the " midmost day " of a century is now an extremely rare event. Most centuries have none, having, since the Gregorian calendar came in, an even number of days; 100×365, plus only 24 for Leap Years. But you are not wrong in imagining that the twentieth century will have a " midmost day ", for it will have twenty-five Leap Years, and therefore an odd number of days, and so a " midmost ".

The next will not be till the twenty-fourth century, and will be (D.V.) 1st January, A.D. 2351.

In the past, with the old " Julian " calendar, every century had a " midmost day ". In this country the only century without one has been the nineteenth. For though we changed our calendar in 1752, and 1800 was not a Leap Year, the lamented loss of eleven days, at the change, left the eighteenth century with an odd number of days, and therefore a " midmost ". But continental countries which changed to the Gregorian calendar in the sixteenth century have not had a midmost day since then. (They had to lose only ten days.)

You have drawn attention to an intriguing, if unimportant, event; and have done it in good time!

D. C. LUSK.

PS. Just in case anyone should wish to be reminded of the Gregorian rule; the centenary years (1800, 1900, etc.) are not Leap Years, unless their first two figures divide by four (e.g. 1600, 2000, 2400).